

# Missouri Completion Academy Self-Assessment Application

## Purpose

This self-assessment will help establish the framework for an effective completion plan and assess an institution's readiness and capacity for implementation.

## Deadline and Questions

Please submit your completed self-assessment to Kathy Love, completion academy coordinator, [kathy.love@dhe.mo.gov](mailto:kathy.love@dhe.mo.gov), by **June 5**. You will be notified by June 24 if your institution has been selected by the Completion Academy Planning Team to participate. Kathy is available to answer your questions at 573.522.1463.

## Instructions

The Completion Academy Planning Team does not expect institutions to submit lengthy reports in response to the self-assessment; thoughtful summaries are welcome. Most institutions will accomplish this in five to ten pages.

Please organize your responses according to the four principal

sections: Section I: Completion Goals

Section II: Common Completion Metrics

Section III: Completion Strategies

Section IV: Commitment to the Completion Agenda

The key considerations are offered to inspire deeper thinking, not with the expectation that each demands a specific, point-by-point response.

## Section I: Completion Goals

1. If your institution has established a college completion goal, please provide it and explain how it aligns with the following key considerations. If your institution has not yet established a goal, please outline your timeline and strategy for its adoption.

Northwest Missouri State University has engaged Noel Levitz to assist it in the development of a strategic enrollment strategy. One oversight team – the Strategic Enrollment Planning Committee – has been formed to oversee the progress of three work groups: Academic Programming; Retention and Progression; and Recruitment, Marketing, and Outreach. These work groups are in the beginning stages of the process: Phase One. This involves data collection, analysis, and review. Therefore, Northwest is in the initial stages of establishing enrollment and completion goals. The process proceeds as follows:

### Preparation and Data Collection

- Assess current supporting data and management reports and their use.

- Identify and conduct appropriate external institutional research and analyses to support the Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP) key performance indicators (KPIs) and subsequent strategy development. Examples include:
  - Perception/image studies of prospective students, parents, counselors, and employers;
  - Price-sensitivity studies of prospective students and parents;
  - Competition analyses;
  - Market share and trend analysis of college-bound target populations using College Board's EPS and ACT EIS;
  - Demographic projection analyses of high school graduates and other target populations;
  - New and expanded market development analyses; and
  - Analyses of prospective student, parent, counselor, and employer wants and needs, including academic programs.
- Identify and conduct appropriate internal institutional research and analyses to support the SEP KPIs and subsequent strategy development. Examples include:
  - Assessment of the relationship of enrollment and institutional fiscal health;
  - Enrollment and fiscal projection scenarios;
  - Analyses of student flows into academic majors and courses;
  - Academic program capacity and demand analyses;
  - Assessment of student satisfaction, engagement, and what is important;
  - Incoming characteristic profile of students who succeed and those who don't succeed;
  - Price discount sensitivity studies of admitted students; and
  - Graduating student outcome analyses.
- Key definitions

#### Establish Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

KPIs are commonly acknowledged measurements that are directly related and critical to the mission and fiscal health of the institution.

- Institution-specific, data-derived measurements that are the foundation for determining the current state of the institution and, when matched with historical comparisons, are relevant for creation of situational (SWOT) analysis and overall strategic planning.
- Reflect effectiveness of broad, cross-departmental cooperation.
- Provide more meaning when compared to those of similar, competing, and/or aspirant institutions.
- Often the most complex, reflecting strategic actions that take considerable time to evolve.
- Supported by and dependent on multiple PIs.

Based on these guidelines, Northwest developed a list of KPIs recognizing that changes may occur as the three workgroups review SWOT analyses and data:

1. Enrollment
2. Student success: enrollment, retention, and placement
3. Program success
4. Market position
5. Fiscal health: total revenue and net revenue
6. Diversity: enrollment and success
7. Student profile

## Section II: Common Completion Metrics

1. Have you completed an analysis of your baseline data and key findings? If so, please share your findings. If not, please indicate your timeline for doing so.

Northwest currently is currently establishing its PIs, which are important measurements that are indirectly related to the mission and support key performance indicators. Our timeline for completion of gathering these data is Fall 2013.

- Often, PIs can be addressed more readily than KPIs. It takes improvement in multiple PIs to impact any one or more KPIs.
- Nearly all PIs are a function of the work done among two or more functional areas.
- Improvements in KPIs and PIs should be an integral part of any institution's strategic planning regimen.
- Through the planning process, institutions can create a list of PIs to support KPI development.

Northwest is developing its PIs in context of each work group. Based on a preliminary examination of the KPIs and PIs, the groups have identified the following PIs are and collecting these data for review:

### Academic Programming

- Attendance data
- Diversity competency should be embedded in all majors
- Number of programs that have obtained national certification or accreditation
- Other measures of academic program quality
- Satisfaction level of employers concerning preparation of graduates
- What is NMSU known for? For example, how much is technology incorporated into all of the majors and could this differentiate NMSU from other institutions?
- What value does NMSU add to the student experience?
- Satisfaction and placement rate of "soft" (i.e., liberal arts) majors
- Define success in market labor data for fine arts and humanities majors
- How does NMSU's general education package prepare students for work?
- Is the discipline (e.g., English) in touch with the marketplace? What skills does a particular major need for the workplace? Why are these majors hired?
- Does NMSU have the programs that students are looking for?
- Clarify academic program titles
- Interdisciplinary skills are valued by employers, but how can we measure if NMSU is giving or developing these skills in graduates?
- Data related to soft skills desirable to employers
- American Council on Education (ACE) data may help with retention rates, and help refer students to other services on campus to develop these skills
- Degrees conferred
- School per major
- Do we offer the programs that meet the needs of our market area?

- Does NMSU have the right majors/minors to serve the students and employers for the next 20 years?
- Placement rates by program
- Asking alumni, “how related is your position to your major and what is your satisfaction with your position?”
- Let students design their own major, interdisciplinary major, and informatics
- How do schools generate income other than by tuition revenue?
- Alternative revenue generation
- Establishing partnerships with business
- Retention by major
- Alternative to Department of Labor data; defining success in labor market for fine arts/humanities/etc. disciplines
- Can we turn everything on its head and develop majors that focus on “Communication Skills with a Computer Science Emphasis,” for example? The point is to develop programs that are based on skills and knowledge rather than disciplines

#### Retention and Progression

- Number of students on probation
- Retention rate of students in counseling
- Graduation rate of students in counseling
- Number and percentage of students seeking academic support
- Course supersede rate
- Campus climate for diversity, race, and ethnicity
- Gaps in indicators among subgroups (race, ethnicity, first generation, etc.)
- Individual course withdrawals or drops; D,F,W rates
- ACT range that can be impacted with scholarships in order to retain or graduate
- Number of students with off-campus alcohol and drug infractions
- Retention and success rates of students living in the residence halls
- Correlation between number of semesters living on-campus and graduation
- Attendance rates
- Early-alert reports
- Student perception of quality of advisement
- Advisement models most effective for NMSU
- Retention Management System *Plus*<sup>TM</sup>: predictor of student success
- Success of students enrolled in developmental courses
- Students earning 1.75-2.00 GPA their first semester and their success rate
- Success rates of students who are engaged in organizations and success rates of students participating in study abroad, volunteering, internships, etc. (including leadership activities)
- Part-time students who drop out
- Average debt of students who leave NMSU prior to graduation
- Top five predictors of retention or success (unmet need, date of acceptance)
- Quality of students who are retained or leave

- How an engaging and/or technologically enhanced classroom instruction impacts retention
- What times students want access to classes and services in order to meet demands/satisfaction
- Top predictor of residence hall satisfaction is personal interaction
- Correlation between unmet financial need and retention
- Effects of personal interaction with faculty and staff
- Effects of seeking assistance, using resources, and asking for help

#### Recruitment, marketing, and outreach

- In-state enrollment
- Out-of-state enrollment
- Above standard admits
- Below standard (conditional) admits
- Performance in recruitment territories
- Yield rates in each category
- First-to-second year retention rates
- Subsequent year retention rates
- Programs – what is in market demand?
- Marketing demand programs
- Demographics – where do students come from?
- Financial: expenses versus return on investment (ROI)
- Net revenue
- Scholarships: effects of need and merit
- Environmental scanning
- Peer performance
- Delivery methods
- Graduate yield
- Consistency of messaging

Northwest will next begin a SWOT analysis for each work group, which will be framed with the data collected in preparation for a July workshop. Preparation then will begin to formulate a situational analysis, which will be completed sometime during the Fall 2013 trimester.

### **Section III: Completion Strategies**

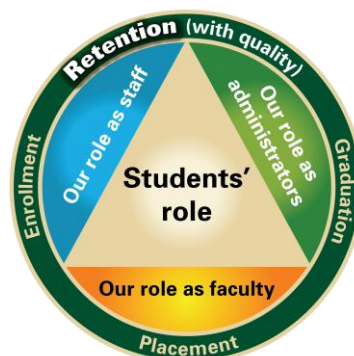
#### **1. What strategies are you employing or considering to reduce time-to-degree and to accelerate student success?**

- Northwest was one of the first in Missouri to establish a reverse transfer agreement with a community college (North Central Missouri College)
- Northwest has several dozen articulation agreements with community colleges across the state. Additionally, we have articulation agreements whereby students can complete a

professional program in an accelerated period of time when they begin their coursework at Northwest and complete their program at a school where the professional program is offered.

- Northwest provides students who meet our admission criteria to be jointly admitted to both Northwest and their community college. Students then can transfer seamless to the four-year institution to complete their degree. In some cases, because of online offerings or Northwest faculty being placed on the community college campus, students may complete their degree at the community college.
- Northwest trimesters are divided into two blocks. While the significant majority of courses are traditional trimester-long courses, we do offer courses in the second block of the trimester as an option for students who may be struggling in their coursework. They are able to drop a course in which they may be earning a letter grade of D or F, and register for a second block course to give them the opportunity to recover without losing time toward completion of their degree.
- Northwest employs an “Early Alert System” for students who miss class. Faculty notify the Advisement Office when a student has been absent from class. Similarly, staff who are concerned can likewise notify the Advisement Office. The Director of the Advisement Office sits on Northwest’s Behavior Intervention Team (BIT), whose membership also includes the Director of the Wellness Center, Director of Counseling, the Chief of Police, the Vice President for Student Affairs, and a faculty member. The BIT serves as a clearing house for potential behavior concerns; the goal of the team is to intervene, when necessary, to provide additional support to students to make sure they have the resources necessary to be successful students.
- We have strategically converted face-to-face courses to online courses and made them available during the summer so that students can complete additional coursework during the summer with the goal of completing earlier.
- The online courses we offer have been an attractive option to our campus-based students, who tend to develop blended schedules (i.e., a combination of online and face-to-face coursework). This flexibility allows them to accommodate work schedules.
- Our online degree audit system (Degree Works) provides students with the tools they need to plan their degree requirements. What has been particularly helpful to students and advisors is the “what if” feature, which allows them to consider their different major options and, based on the coursework already completed, calculates the time-to-degree that remains.
- We have a sophisticated academic support network. The Talent Development Center provides sophisticated academic support program, which includes Supplemental Instructors (SIs), tutors, mentors, and workshops. This is supplemented by the Academic Resource Consultants in-Hall (ARCH). ARCHs are specially trained to get students the resources they need for academic success.
- Northwest used the “Achievement via Individual Determination” (AVID) approach to improve student learning and faculty teaching in the context of Northwest’s Model for Student Success (see figure). Using this approach, we provided workshops to faculty regarding effective ways to present material, as well as to students regarding note-taking, critical thinking, etc.
- Northwest has increased number of seats in online courses and face-to-face courses to prevent bottlenecks and allow timely progress

#### Student Success at Northwest



in a student's academic program.

- Northwest requires all students to meet with their faculty advisors at least once each semester. They must do so before they are able to pre-register for courses.
- Northwest pre-registers all admitted first time, full time freshmen in 16-18 credit hours before their first trimester based on their declared major, ACT score, and other admissions index information.

2. Describe your institution's efforts to transform remediation, your approach to reform and timeline for implementation.

Northwest's Developmental Math courses have been redesigned using a performance-based assessment model. The goals in the redesign were two-fold: to get students prepared for college-level math more efficiently/quickly and to provide students the opportunity to complete remediation only in those areas in which they are deficient (i.e., to provide students with flexibility). Prior to the beginning of the trimester, students take an assessment to determine their math skill level. The results of the assessment determine if they need to take any developmental math. The redesigned "course" is divided into 10 modules, and students register only for those modules that contain content in which they earned an unsatisfactory score.

The students complete the modules at their own pace, with minimum progress expected and monitored. However, students may complete the modules more quickly, if they are able. The content is presented using myMathLab in a computer laboratory that is solely dedicated for this purpose. Students work through the modules in the presence of undergraduate, graduate, and faculty mentors.

Previous data showed that students who earn a letter grade of "C" or lower in their developmental math course are less likely to successfully complete college-level math. Therefore, students must earn at least a letter grade of "B" on any particular module before they can move either to another module or to college-level math.

This approach was piloted during the 2011-12 academic year, and fully implemented in the 2012-13 academic year. Faculty are now reviewing the data and making modifications to the approach based on the data, as well as the results of a survey of students.

3. Certificates often produce incomes that exceed many associate and even some Bachelor's degrees. How does your institution count certificate completions, especially those earned in one year or more at public institutions? Does your institution factor certificates into state completion goals?

As a four-year degree-granting institution, we consider a certificate as a "stackable credential" and believe there is value in providing increased opportunities – especially at the graduate level – for students to begin or return to higher education to improve their skills/knowledge. This analysis (i.e., what certificates the market-place is demanding and what expertise we have in providing them) is part of our Strategic Enrollment Planning process.

4. A new American majority of students has emerged: most students today must balance the job they need with the higher education they desire. Has your institution developed new delivery structures to help students better balance work and school?

We have approached this differently for our undergraduate and graduate populations. In our graduate programs, we have designed coursework in selected programs (e.g., MBA) in a way so that students have a predictable schedule and attend courses on Friday night and Saturdays, can complete one course at a time in a condensed time frame, but can complete necessary degree requirements in the same amount of time as a traditional graduate student. In other words, they complete a single course in a shorter period of time (e.g., 5 weeks) and are able to complete a “full load” of courses (i.e., 9 credit hours) in a trimester.

In other programs (e.g., education) we have developed degree programs and certificates that are accommodating to the schedule of professionals already in the field. For example, many graduate programs are designed as “blended” courses so that graduate students can work while taking classes. These classes combine both online work with face-to-face interactions, which provides flexibility for working students.

Finally, we also offer select online degree programs. As mentioned previously, on-campus students are “blending” their schedule to include face-to-face and online. Northwest has strategically converted courses (e.g., general education and bottleneck courses ) to an online format so students can complete more quickly.

## **Section IV: Commitment to the Completion Agenda**

Effective completion strategies are possible only when commitment to improving completion rates is modeled by the highest level administrators and faculty. In this final question, you are asked to list up to eight members of your system or campus team that commit to attend the Missouri Completion Academy. The team must be led by a president or chancellor, chief academic officer or executive vice president. Please submit names and titles on the Missouri Completion Academy Campus Team Roster form.

Douglas Dunham	CAO/Provost
Beverly Schenkel	Dean of Enrollment Management
Joel Benson	Faculty Senate President
Charles McAdams	Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Steve Bryant	Director of Intercultural Affairs
Leslie Galbreath	Dean, Academic and Library Services
Mary Ann Penniston	Interim Director of Institutional Research
TBD	Academic Department Chair representative